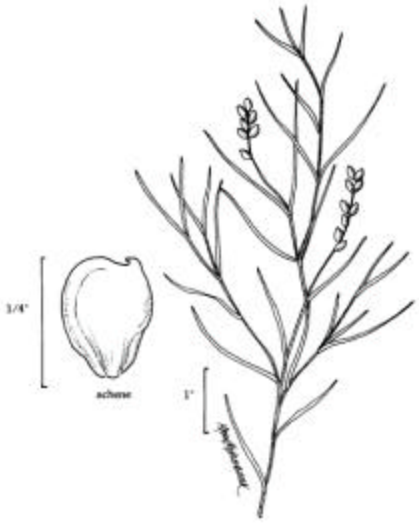
Sago Pondweed (*Potamogeton Pectinatus*)

- McAtee (1917) described sago pondweed as "the best all round duck food in North America."

- Martin et al. (1951) ranked sago pondweed's food value to waterfowl as "the outstanding species in this outstanding genus."

- Sago pondweed has exceptionally high forage value for a wide range of waterfowl, including mallard and pintail (Martin et al. 1951; Kantrud 1990).

- Grows actively in salinities up to 14 ppt (Kantrud 1990).



Sago Pondweed. Source: Soil Conservation Service. Western Wetland Flora

- Waterfowl eat all parts of sago pondweed: turions (starchy tuber-like storage structures), stems, leaves, and rootstocks (Kantrud 1990).

- Dabbling ducks (*Anatini*) likely consume mostly drupelets (seed-like fruits). Rhizome fragments or nearly whole plants often appear on the surface after being discarded by waterfowl that feed on turions. Much of this material is readily eaten by dabbling ducks (Kantrud 1990).

- Diving ducks, such as canvasbacks (*Aythyini*), are able to exploit foods in bottom sediments, and probably prefer turions when feeding on sago pondweed (Kantrud 1990).

- Sago pondweed has been found to compose 50% or more of the diet of canvasbacks; 25% to 50% of the diet of mallards and redheads (*Aythya americana*); and between 10% to 25% of the diet of pintails, teal (*Anas crecca*), and scaup (*Aythya spp*.) (Martin et al. 1951).

- Sago pondweed provides an ample source of carbohydrates for waterfowl. Approximately 75% of sago pondweed's nutrient composition consists of nitrogen-free extract, a measure of digestible carbohydrates (Krapu and Reinecke 1992).

- Sago pondweed drupelets serve as a grinding media in waterfowl gizzards (Wetmore 1921), and sago pondweed can reduce the toxic effects of lead pellets (Jordan and Bellrose 1951).

- Sago pondweed beds are heavily used feeding sites for waterfowl broods due to the abundant and easily obtainable populations of macroinvertebrates, which are a prime source of protein for young birds (Hochbaum 1944; Monda and Ratti 1988).